

TOPEKA STATE JOURNAL.

By FRANK P. MAC LENNAN.

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OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS.

The State Journal is a member of the Associated Press and receives the full daily (except Sunday) report of that great news organization. It is the only paper in the state which publishes the full report of the Associated Press. The news is received in The State Journal building over wires for this sole purpose.

HOME NEWS WHILE AWAY.

Subscribers of the State Journal away during the summer may have the paper mailed regularly each day to any address at the rate of ten cents a week or thirty cents a month (by mail only). Address changed as often as desired. While out of town the State Journal will be to you like a daily letter from home.

Advance payment is requested on these short time subscriptions, to save bookkeeping expense.

The boss busters seem to be getting uneasy in Florida also.

Seattle has another case of "emotional insanity," and it is a very severe one.

Mr. Bryan is an exceedingly wise and frisky gentleman, judging by the interview he gave out in London Thursday.

Governor Hoch went from attending the Indian Territory chautauqua assemblies to the one at Parsons. Parsons doesn't criticize his attitude on the "Katy" matter.

It is already proposed that the government shall own and operate the coal mines. Very likely some one will come forward soon with a proposition for government ownership of ice plants.

There will be no investigation of the Denver election frauds. When the public service corporations allow anything to be investigated in Denver it won't be elections in which they have been interested.

"Mr. Rockefeller" says the Washington Star, "is at least to be complimented as a rich man whose wealth never led him into any vulgar scandals." But Mr. Rockefeller doesn't live in Pittsburgh.

In speaking of the faults of the jury system, Frank Jarrell says a jury in Jackson county, which is practically free from liquor influences, recently acquitted a bootlegger who admitted that he had sold liquor.

This plan of Councilman Griley's to have Senator Harris inaugurate governor of Kansas next January, whether the inauguration ceremony is held in the auditorium or not, may be interfered with by the Kansas voters. And then again it may not.

How much longer is this garbage nuisance problem to continue? It has been running for a serial now for years. Very likely, if the truth was known, the founders of the town had trouble the first day over the garbage question.

Mr. Bryan is in favor of admitting all who so desire to the Democratic party and have no questions asked. But when it comes to running the party machinery—well, it would be best to hire those who have shown experience and who know the machine, he thinks.

Another of the funny things of the present campaign is the way that some people who abused the State Journal two years ago for not supporting the Republican candidates are fighting the present Republican candidates for those offices. The present nominees could not possibly be any more pro-railroad than were those of two years ago.

Noting that the friends of Mayor Rose in Kansas City proposed to pay that thousand-dollar fine for him, a Kansas editor in Kansas City might better to invest this thousand dollars that way than to spend it for a thousand dollars' worth of booze. It would be difficult, however, to convince that kind of people that they would not get more fun out of the other investment.

It doesn't take much to scare the packers into being good now. The Kansas State Board of Health brought them to time with no effort at all. The board intimated that it wasn't nice to use preservatives on meat products, and when they are used the labels ought to say so. And immediately the packers said they would quit using any preservatives. Six months ago the State Board of Health might have made all sorts of orders to the packers, and the packers would only have waved their thumbs and fingers at the board and told it not to get funny. We are certainly living under "changed conditions," as Governor Hoch said to E. B. Stubbs.

A SATURDAY SERMON.

THE PRICE OF A DRINK.

Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging.—Proverbs 20:1.

"One drink is all we had."

This is the statement made by Charles McNatt as he sat in jail after stabbing a fellowman last Thursday night.

One drink! But it made him unreasonable and fired his brain with hatred for a companion when the latter did not comply with an unnecessary request.

One drink! But it made Charles McNatt a murderer in his heart and almost a murderer in fact.

One drink! But it has opened the penitentiary doors before the drinker, and it may send him to prison for years.

One drink! But it has brought disgrace and remorse to him who swallowed the poison.

One drink! But it sent an innocent man down almost to the gates of death.

One drink! But it has imposed on society the necessity of prosecuting McNatt for his rash act, which will entail a heavy cost in dollars and cents on the community.

A rather costly drink, was it not? The few cents paid by McNatt to the criminal who sold it to him does not represent its price. In the cost must be reckoned the anguish, the suffering of friends, the murderous intent, the physical pain of the victim, the cost of prosecution and defense; and, if the drinker is convicted, the years to be spent behind prison bars, and the expense to the state of his punishment.

Pretty high price for one drink, isn't it?

When Charles McNatt took that drink Thursday evening he had no idea of attempting to stab a fellow workman. There was then no murder in his heart. He was doubtless a man of average good intentions. But the drink changed him.

How many stories of crimes and accidents in the newspapers close with the words, "He had been drinking!" How many, many drinks have such a fatal price attached to them? What would Charles McNatt not give today had he not taken that one drink!

The drinker never knows before-hand which drink has the terrible cost mark on. Had McNatt known he would never have taken that drink on Thursday. It's a pretty good idea not to run the risk of any of them.

A TRANSFER OF CREDIT.

According to Mr. Trickett it appears that Governor Hoch is not entitled to any honor for closing the joints in Kansas City, Kan., but that the credit for Trickett's appointment for that purpose belongs to Attorney General Coleman.

Accordingly the state Journal desires to withdraw the commendation it gave Governor Hoch for having a hand in the Kansas City movement, and give whatever credit there may be for Mr. Trickett's appointment to the attorney general. This paper desires to commend Mr. Coleman whenever it can consistently do so.

Mr. Trickett alleges, if he has been correctly quoted, that Governor Hoch was opposed to his appointment and desired to retain Assistant Attorney General McComb, who wasn't accomplishing anything; that Mr. Coleman dismissed McComb and appointed Trickett over the governor's objection.

It is difficult to believe, as is intimated, that Governor Hoch is opposed to the strict enforcement of the prohibition law, even if an election is pending in which such an action would cost him the joint vote. At least the State Journal desires to give him the benefit of believing that he is for law-enforcement.

But if the governor really desires that the law shall be enforced he will doubtless take immediate measures to see that it is done in Wichita, Leavenworth, Junction City, and all other places where it is openly and notoriously violated. He has already served three-fourths of his term and nothing has been done about law-enforcement in any of these towns. It was stated some time ago that the mayor of Wichita, who headed the Sedgewick county delegation to the Republican state convention, aided in suppressing the opposition to Hoch in the Sedgewick delegation in order that the governor would not take the same steps at Wichita that he did at Kansas City towards Mayor Rose. The state is now waiting to see if events corroborate this story.

One of the questions submitted to legislative candidates by Mr. W. R. Stubbs and his associates indicates that there will be a move in the coming legislature to do away with the state board of railroad assessors and to place the duty of assessing the railroads on the township assessors.

Now it is possible that the township assessors would, as a rule, assess the railroads as satisfactorily as it is done under the present system. But the reverse might be true. The State Journal realizes that the work of not only the present board of railway assessors but of former boards has perhaps been open to criticism, but it doubts the wisdom of placing the duty of assessing the railroads on the township trustees.

Some trustees would "stick" the railroads by making their taxes extremely heavy. Others would be influenced by passes or other considerations to give the railroads the best of it. Even those trustees who desired to be absolutely honest and fair would not have the time nor opportunity to fully study the subject of railroad taxation.

It is a notorious fact that our present system of assessment and taxation is about as inflexible as it could well be. No two assessors have the same standard of values, and to place the railroads under the township assessors would not help matters any as conditions are at present.

As a matter of fact railroads come as near paying their full share of the

burden of government as do most private citizens. Many farmers pay only a sixth or a seventh of the actual value of their farms, and many men with money or mortgages in the bank escape taxation altogether.

The trouble with railroad taxation is that the railroads wish to pay taxes only on the actual cost of the road, but when it comes to charging freight rates they include in the value of the road the excessively watered stock added to the heavily bonded debt.

In other words, when it comes to fixing rates the railroad demands, over and above its operating expenses, interest on its bonded debt, and also a dividend on its stock. But when it comes to paying taxes it wishes to pay only on what the road cost. As many railroads are capitalized and bonded for six or eight times their cost, this is not fair.

The Kansas taxation system ought to be reformed by compelling all property to be listed at its actual value. The actual value of a railroad could be ascertained by simply figuring the total market value of the stock, and figuring what per cent of the road belongs in Kansas. The apportioning of the values to the various lines and branches would, however, be a big task. This could be obviated by having the railroads pay their taxes directly to the state. The railroad taxes in Kansas would be just about enough to run the state government, thereby obviating the necessity of counties paying a state tax.

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